



HSL NEWS



Student Spotlight

Well done to Connie, Grace, Talia and Syra for taking part in the Cheltenham Education Partnership's Horizons Council

UPCOMING EVENTS

- * **Year 9 Parents' Evening - in person**
Thursday 5th February 2026
- * **We Will Rock You! rehearsals**
Saturday 31st January 2026
Saturday 7th February 2026
- * **We Will Rock You!**
Wednesday 11th February at 7pm
Thursday 12th February at 7pm
Friday 13th February at 7pm
- * **End of term**
Friday 13th February at 3:35pm

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is a pleasure to share with you our January newsletter, which is packed full of events at HSL. When reading this edition, which is so expertly put together by Mrs Simms, what strikes me is the collective theme of teamwork in every article. Each day our students show what can be achieved when they support one another, lead with confidence, and work collaboratively towards shared goals. Throughout January our students have taken part in competitions, performances, sporting fixtures, leadership events and charity initiatives—reflecting the maturity, determination and spirit that bring our school alive every day.

As I said to the students in my assemblies at the start of term, January is a time of looking forward, and focusing on the small steps we can achieve towards our larger goals. This is particularly relevant for our Year 9 students who are now looking forward to choosing their GCSE options, having attended a very positive and purposeful Options Evening. It was fantastic to see them engaging thoughtfully with their next steps and considering where their interests and strengths might take them. Meanwhile, Year 11 continue to impress us with their commitment to revision. Many are attending sessions before school, at lunchtime, and after school most days. Their focus is clear, and we are incredibly proud of how they are preparing themselves for the months ahead.

Of course, one of the highlights of recent weeks has been House Lip Sync—an event that never fails to bring energy, creativity and plenty of laughter. Alongside this, House football is now well underway, and it has been a joy to watch students organise themselves, take on leadership roles, and navigate the dynamics of teamwork so maturely. These are skills that will serve them far beyond their time in school.

We are also eagerly looking ahead to our school musical, *We Will Rock You!* Rehearsals are in full swing, and the excitement is building. Thank you for your ongoing support of the performing arts at HSL; we are incredibly grateful. We hope you will join us in celebrating the hard work, talent and dedication of our amazing students by purchasing your tickets—it's a show you won't want to miss. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I hope you enjoy reading about the wonderful achievements of our students this month.

Kind regards
Helen Wood, Headteacher

PTFA Preloved Uniform & Lost Property

The PTFA Preloved Uniform team will be available at the same time as lost property viewings this Autumn Term. This is a great opportunity to check for any missing items and to purchase good-quality, affordable uniform.

Dates (6.00–8.00pm):

24th February

24th March

If you have any outgrown uniform in good condition, donations are very welcome and can be dropped off at school reception. All proceeds go back into supporting our school community.

This Month in Pictures



Charlie, our Mini Librarian, standing next to a metre of books we won through Cheltenham Literature Festival!



Year 11 students achieving their Silver Duke of Edinburgh award!



Rehearsals are in full swing for our upcoming school production, We Will Rock You!



Our under 13 Hockey Team demonstrating true HSL team spirit during a recent tournament!

We Will Rock You!

The rehearsals are ramping up as we get closer to show week with the programme being designed, costumes being made, set pieces being created and new mics being used. We have some very exciting deliveries next week and we are sure they're going to impress! The students are working so hard and are very excited to welcome you to the show. Here is what our Galileo has to say:

“The show process has been really fun and very exciting. The run up to the show is the most exciting bit, as you can see it all coming together! I'm really excited for the show week as it will be tons of fun!”

Freddie, Year 10

And one of our new Year 7s Madeline: “I have loved doing the production! It's been so fun doing the rehearsals and learning the songs. I can't wait to have the show night!”

Tickets are selling fast so if you've not yet booked your tickets, please do so as soon as possible to avoid disappointment!





NEWS FROM HSL PTFA

parents • teachers • friends

PTFA in 2026

Hello everyone — we hope 2026 is off to a great start!

The PTFA has already held its first committee meeting of the year, and plans are well underway for some exciting events. We're gearing up to run interval refreshments at the **"We Will Rock You" school production** (fingers crossed we can beat last year's fantastic £1,200 total!).

We're also busy planning our much-loved **Quiz & Chips Night**, taking place on **24th April 2026** — last year we broke our record for the number of teams, so we're hoping for another brilliant turnout!

Mrs Cox also shared some exciting ideas on **how the PTFA can support fundraising for an important school project this year** — more details coming soon.

We're delighted to share that our **first Preloved Uniform Sale of 2026 raised almost £150!** Huge thanks to everyone who donated, bought items, or helped organise the sale.

Finally, help us stay connected! Please follow us on Facebook and Instagram by scanning the QR codes below or searching for us on social media.

Thanks, as always, for your continued support ❤️
The PTFA Team

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS
If you could give us an hour of your time to help set-up and serve interval drinks at the school production **sign up here: <https://shorturl.at/j4Bii>**




Last year's quiz team winners, The Quizzly Bears.

Please help us grow the HSL PTFA Community

Did you know we're on FaceBook and Instagram?



The High School Leckhampton PTFA
The High School Leckhampton PTFA @highschoolleckhamptonpta

We'd love to stay connected with more of you! Please consider following us on FaceBook and Instagram for updates, events and ways to get involved. Scan the QR codes below or search for us on social media.



FaceBook



Instagram

@highschoolleckhamptonpta

DIARY DATES

11th-13th Feb School Production "We Will Rock You", 7-9pm



25th Feb Preloved Uniform Sale, 6-7pm

24th April Quiz & Chips Night, 7-10pm



10th July Summer Fair & BBQ



Scan the QR code to join our friendly PTFA Volunteers team!

House Gym and Dance

At the end of 2025 we rounded off a very busy term with our annual House Gym and Dance competition.

As always, the students had a great time choosing their music, choreographing their dances and rehearsing tirelessly before school, at breaktimes, lunchtimes and after school. There were moments that wherever you turned in the school someone was dancing!

The themes this year were chosen by Heads of House and members of their house and the participation level and standard of performances was very high across all Houses.

This year we had a number of whole tutor groups taking part, Miss Winters and Miss Barrat worked wonders with the Year 7 and Year 8 Lilley Brook team with well-choreographed routines fitting their theme of 'Seasons' perfectly. Ms Nelmes and Ms Pike performed at the helm for Chelt and Isbourne respectively in their Open categories, with Chelt having over 100 students on stage during their 'Icons' finale. Mrs Bull introduced our first ever staff dance where the Windrush tutor team interpreted their theme of 'Sports' with well timed, fluent and graceful movements!

Congratulations

to all of the acts that took part in the highlights show - the variety of styles, interpretation of themes, professionalism and quality of performances was a treat for our students to watch and hopefully aspire to for next years competition.

The final standings were:

- 1st - Windrush
- 2nd - Chelt
- 3rd - Lilley Brook
- 4th - Isbourne





Library News



We have been busy in the LRC sorting books into sub-genres so students can find books more easily. I am delighted to have many volunteers helping to sort books, add them to our database and make new signs for the shelves during lunch time. We have really helpful Year 7 Mini Librarians as well as students volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh bronze and silver awards. I would like to thank them all for their contributions.

We had a lovely surprise when two enormous bags of brand new, recently published books arrived on the library desk this month. We have been very fortunate to have won a student's height worth of books from the Cheltenham Literature Festival. After our fantastic trips to the event in October, Mrs. Simms filled out a feedback form, giving us an entry into the competition. A huge thank you to Cheltenham Literature Festival!



Silver D of E success



Congratulations to our Year 11 students who have successfully completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. To achieve this nationally recognised award, students committed to six months of volunteering and developing a new skill, as well as taking part in regular physical activity to improve their fitness and teamwork. The award also required students to complete a challenging three-day, two-night expedition, during which they planned their own route, carried all their equipment, navigated independently and worked together to overcome both physical and mental challenges.

Completing the Silver DofE demonstrates resilience, independence and dedication, and we are extremely proud of their achievements!



Future Chef Competition Success

We are proud to congratulate Evie C. 11WI for representing HSL in this year's Future Chef Competition, held at Balcarras School. She participated with enthusiasm, creativity, and confidence, showcasing her passion for cooking throughout the event. The judges praised her delicious Chicken Katsu and flawless Profiteroles. Not only did she perform incredibly well, but she also embraced the challenge, learned new skills, and truly enjoyed the experience. We are delighted to celebrate her hard work and dedication. Well done, Evie we are all very proud of you!



Year 8 French Cuisine

Josh Copeland from Mrs Wright's Year 8 French class brought in his signature crêpes again this month.

He and his dad were very busy preparing these delights for the whole of the class. Together with Nutella, biscoff and salted caramel spreads! C'était vraiment délicieux!

Merci Josh et son père!



Horizons Council Event

This week four of our Year 11 students represented HSL at the Horizons Council Event, teamed with Lives of Colour. The students had to research their title question, formulate their thoughts and ideas and then present them to over 50 people.

The title that our HSL team were presented with was:

'How can we make Cheltenham's cultural festivals have a focus on inclusion, confront stereotypes and showcase diverse talents?'

As part of the day our students, Talia, Grace, Constance and Syra, presented their ideas to Sarah Cooksley from Cheltenham Festivals who was very impressed with their research and approach to the project.

Our students then had a brain-storming session with Sarah to further develop their ideas on the topic, where they came up with the concepts of taking elements of the festivals to communities who may not ordinarily access the festivals. Following this session our students presented their work to the 9 other schools from Cheltenham Education Partnership and then worked with students across the schools, and experts in their field, to look at other key areas that are affecting race equity and inclusion in Cheltenham.

The students that made up our team had a great time at the event, and enjoyed the opportunity to discuss current topics that affect the area in which they live, whilst meeting new people in the process.



Student Sporting Success

Congratulations to Jack Boyd in Year 10 who has recently been in Champéry, Switzerland competing for Great Britain at Slalom ski racing. Jack was competing against other athletes from a number of countries, including France, Germany and South Africa in the Welsh Championships.

In the male category Jack came a very impressive 10th overall and finished in an incredible 3rd place in the U16 category. Well done Jack.



Under 13 County Hockey Tournament



This tournament was nothing short of a statement.

In the build-up, the U13s faced a difficult decision: enter the Tier 2 competition, where progression was not possible, or step up into Tier 1 and test ourselves against established hockey schools such as

Dean Close and Cheltenham College Prep. After careful consideration, we chose Tier 1, approaching the day with a clear ‘nothing to lose’ mindset.

Discussions on the minibus reflected this attitude, a focus on effort, resilience and pride, regardless of scorelines. What followed exceeded all expectations.

Our opening match against Dean Close was an outstanding contest. We held them to 0–0 for much of the 30-minute game, creating chances at both ends. Dean Close eventually found the breakthrough and defended resolutely to deny the attacking threat of Henry Costello, Tobey Roberts, Jake Bourne and Will Hucker, with the match finishing 1–0. Despite the result, both teams were full of praise for the quality of hockey on display.

Next up was Cheltenham College Prep, fresh from a thrilling 3–2 victory over Dean Close. Even with some superb goalkeeping from Archie Biggs, we conceded two excellent goals. Undeterred, the boys responded brilliantly, pulling a goal back and applying sustained pressure until the final whistle. Chances came and went, and we were left narrowly defeated once again.

The results only tell part of the story. The boys were exceptional throughout the day, not only in their performances, but in their spirit, enthusiasm and attitude when facing a very tough challenge. They were a credit to themselves and the school, and undoubtedly created memories that will last a lifetime.

Under 16 County Hockey Tournament

Our U16s have once again qualified for the Regional Finals, achieving this for the third consecutive year as a year group, a remarkable achievement for such a small cohort of hockey players.

The County Tournament began with a tense 0–0 draw against Bournside. Despite HSL enjoying the majority of possession, we were unable to convert our chances, and the dropped points introduced a few early nerves into the squad. However, the response was excellent. Convincing victories against The Cotswold School and St Edward’s followed, with the team showing real composure, intensity and belief. Standout performances came from Zac Litman, Noah Guest, Charlie Hucker and Jack Boyd, who formed the backbone of the side throughout the day. Lachie Hart also deserves special mention for a series of outstanding saves in goal. We eventually finished runners-up to KLB, who won all of their matches, including a hard-fought victory over us. With the top two teams progressing to the Regional Tournament, qualification was secured, a result we were absolutely delighted with. Onto the Regional Tournament on Tuesday 24th February.



Thick Jumper Day for Médecins Sans Frontières

On Friday 16th January, all students and staff were invited to wear a thick jumper to raise money for Médecins Sans Frontières. Students voted Médecins Sans Frontières last term as one of our chosen charities to support this academic year. The Eco-Committee gave out sustainable prizes to the student with the best thick jumper in each year group.

As part of our commitment to reduce our carbon footprint on our journey to be zero carbon by 2030, we also took part in WWF's "Turn down one degree" challenge by turning down the heating on the same day. To find out more about WWF's "Turn down one degree" challenge so you can also take part at home please see their website:

<https://www.wwf.org.uk/challenges/turn-down-one-degree>.

In total we raised £576 Médecins Sans Frontières which will help provide medical care across conflict zones around the world. Thank you to all students and staff who donated and we look forward to seeing more fantastic thick jumpers next year.

To find out more about the work of Médecins Sans Frontières please see their website: <https://msf.org.uk/>



HSL Climate Changemakers Bid for Funding

On Thursday 22nd January, five of our Climate Changemakers attended a workshop at HSL organised by the Cheltenham Education Partnership (CEP).

Earlier this month our Climate Changemakers submitted a bid for £250 from Cheltenham Borough Council to purchase high quality litter pickers to keep our school site free from litter. As part of the workshop our Climate Changemakers were given 5 minutes to present their bids to a panel of four sustainability stakeholders in Cheltenham and answer questions from each individual. The panel was composed of:

Councillor Richard Pineger – Cabinet member for Climate Emergency, Cheltenham Borough Council

Louise Forey – Manager, Cheltenham Education Partnership

Maizy McCann - Climate Officer, Cheltenham Borough Council

James Cooke - CEO, Vision 21

Our Climate Changemakers impressed the panel with their presentation and emphasis on how their litter picking project would not just improve the environment but also the attitude of our school community as a result. They spoke confidently in front of Climate Changemakers from many other local schools, most of whom were sixth formers.

At the end of the workshop we were delighted to discover that our bid had been successful. In fact, Cheltenham Borough Council were so impressed with our presentation that they have increased their donation to £270!

Big Garden Birdwatch 2026

On Friday 23rd January HSL took part in the world's largest wildlife survey to help the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) build a picture of how garden birds are faring.

Eco-Committee members spent a rainy lunchtime in our nature area, watching for and recording any birds we saw that landed on our site using the tally chart below. We submitted the results of the birdwatch online and are looking forward to when the national results are released later this year.

Miss Kennedy would like to thank the students that took part, including any HSL families that carried out their own birdwatch over the weekend and submitted their results.



Get involved in the Eco-Committee!

If you are interested in getting involved in the Eco-Committee, please come along on Monday lunchtimes at 1:30pm in GW3.



RLSS National Pool Lifeguard Course

Ideal for anyone over 16 who is looking to learn new skills and earn some extra income in a fun place of work.

Candidates will:

- Gain an official qualification to supervise pools.
- Learn CPR and life saving skills
- Obtain 8 UCAS points
- Boost their CV

Dates:

- 7/4/26-11/4/26
- 20/7/26-24/7/26
- 17/8/26-21/8/26

Venue:

Cheltenham College Sports Centre, Thirlestaine Road, GL53 7AH

Candidates must be over 16 and be able to:

Jump/dive into deep water

Swim 50 metres in less than 60 seconds

Swim 100 metres continuously on front and back

In deep water, tread water for 30 seconds

Surface dive to the floor of the pool

Climb out unaided without a ladder/steps and where the pool design permits.



RLSS UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ)

The UK and Ireland's most awarded pool lifeguard qualification, and internationally recognised.

The NPLQ teaches candidates Pool Rescue Techniques, Lifeguarding Theory, First Aid and CPR in engaging and interactive training sessions.

Venue: Cheltenham College Date: 7/4/26 - 11/4/26

Cost: £260 How to book: Pls contact I.Hamilton@cheltenhamcollege.org

@RLSSUK fRLSSUK @RLSSUK

For more information or to book your place, visit www.rlss.org.uk/nplq

Bikeability Holiday Courses

Gloucestershire County Council is offering Bikeability courses during all 2026 school holidays. These courses are designed for children aged 9–14 and help build cycling confidence and safety skills in small groups with qualified instructors

2026 Course Locations & Dates:

- February Half-Term: Ashley Manor Prep School, Cheltenham
- Easter Holidays: Bournside School, Cheltenham
- May Half-Term: Kingshill School
- Summer Holidays: Skillzone (2 sessions available)
- October Half-Term: Pineholt Village Hall
- Course Details:

Cost: £10 per course (2 x 2-hour sessions)

Bikes: Available subject to availability

Booking:

<https://forms.office.com/e/vBSvziEEBk>

